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### Benedict XII and the Crusades

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## Chapter 8

### **Benedict XII and the Crusades**

Mike Carr

During the fourteenth century the Eastern Mediterranean underwent a dramatic political and religious transformation. The Mamluk sultanate of Egypt maintained control of the Holy Land and the southern Levantine regions, but in Asia Minor, Greece, and the Balkans the rising Anatolian Turkish principalities began to replace previous Byzantine, Frankish, and Serbo-Bulgarian domination. In this century, the planning and launching of a crusade to the East changed in accordance with this new reality, both in terms of who initiated a crusade and against whom one was aimed. Although a desire to liberate Jerusalem never died out, it is safe to say that the fourteenth century witnessed a change in crusade impetus, as proposals to defend Christian territories from Turkish advances came to dominate crusading strategy. In other theatres too, great changes were underfoot during this period. In Iberia the kingdoms of Castile, Aragon-Catalonia, and Portugal gradually pushed the Moors from all but the southernmost regions of the peninsula, and in north-eastern Europe the Catholic rulers launched increasingly successful campaigns to convert and subject the Lithuanians and other Baltic peoples, as well as to defend their territories from Tartar incursions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For an introduction to the crusades of the fourteenth century, see M. Carr, *Merchant Crusaders in the Aegean, 1291-1352* (Woodbridge, 2015); C.J. Tyerman, 'New Wine in Old Skins? The crusade and the Eastern Mediterranean in the later Middle Ages', in *Byzantines, Latins and Turks in the Eastern Mediterranean World after 1150*, ed. C. Holmes and J. Harris (Oxford, 2012), 265–89; N. Housley, *The Avignon Papacy and the Crusades, 1305–1378* (Oxford, 1986); N. Housley, *The Later Crusades from Lyons to Alcazar, 1274–1580* (Oxford, 1992), 8–79; K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant: 1204–1571*, 4 vols (Philadelphia, 1976–84), i, 162–369; E.A. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade: Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Menteshe and Aydin (1300–1415)* (Venice, 1983), 4–75; E. Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: the Baltic and the Catholic*

The pontificate of Benedict XII was sandwiched between two of the most active crusading popes of the century, John XXII (1316–1334) and Clement VI (1342–1352). Their dedication to the crusade was characterized by a vigorous response to the Turkish threat, reflected by two of the most significant crusading enterprises of the period: the naval league launched in the Aegean in 1333–1334, and the Crusade of Smyrna in 1343–1352. The reign of Benedict XII stood squarely between these two periods of heightened crusade activity, yet his pontificate was marked by a lack of action in regard to the Aegean and the Levant. Indeed, as Norman Housley has commented, ‘in terms of a crusade to the East, Benedict’s reign was the least productive of the Avignon popes’.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Benedict granted crusading privileges in Iberia and in north-eastern Europe, and at times he also made moves to aid the beleaguered Christian rulers of the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as to seek reconciliation with Greek Orthodox and excommunicate Catholic groups in *Romania*.

In an attempt to untangle these seemingly contradictory and inconsistent policies, this chapter will explore the papal response to the rulers of these different regions in regard to their defence of the faith against non-Christians, as well as their ability to maintain doctrinal orthodoxy. In particular, this chapter will analyse the implementation and withholding of papal mechanisms associated with crusading – such as preaching, indulgences, and tithes – as well as the negotiations undertaken in an attempt to form Christian alliances against Muslims, all of which come under the wider umbrella of crusading during the period.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the

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*frontier, 1100–1525* (London, 1980), 132–91; J.F. O’Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade: Castile and the battle for the strait* (Philadelphia, 2011), 112–217.

<sup>2</sup> Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 31.

<sup>3</sup> As Tyerman has noted, some campaigns attracted all of the apparatus associated with crusading, whilst others are less clear: Tyerman, ‘New Wine in Old Skins?’, 266.

chapter will conclude by addressing the effect that Benedict's pontificate had on shaping wider crusading strategy during the fourteenth century.

### **Crusade Planning in 1334–1335: Continuity and Support**

After the death of John XXII in December 1334, Benedict took the helm of the naval league in the Aegean. This was a combined flotilla made up of vessels provided by the papacy and the king of France, along with those of the Kingdom of Cyprus, the Republic of Venice, and the Knights Hospitaller of Rhodes. The league assembled in the summer of 1334 and won numerous successes against the Turks, most notably a crushing victory over the emir of Karasi off the Gulf of Adramyttion in September.<sup>4</sup> On his accession, Benedict continued to support the plans already laid by his predecessor for a second wave of this league, which it was initially intended would act as a preliminary passage for a crusade to the Holy Land to be led by Philip VI of France in August 1336.<sup>5</sup> Details of the second phase of the league had already been outlined by John XXII shortly before his death when the pope had written to Robert of Naples urging him to participate in the forthcoming offensive. This was to involve transporting an army across the Mediterranean to fight the Turks on land and to deliver aid to Cilician Armenia. The force was to consist of a total of 800 men – 400 provided by the papacy and France, 200 by the Hospitallers, 100 by Hugh IV of Cyprus, and 100 by the Byzantine emperor – as well as galleys and horse transports from the same powers and from

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<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion of the naval league of 1334, see V. Ivanov, 'Sancta Unio or the Holy League 1332–36/7 as a Political Factor in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean', *Études Balkaniques*, 48 (2012), 142–76; Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 21–40; P. Lemerle, *L'Émirat d'Aydin, Byzance et l'Occident: recherches sur la 'Geste d'Umur Pacha'* (Paris, 1957), 89–101; Carr, *Merchant Crusaders*, 63–78.

<sup>5</sup> Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 24–6.

Venice and Naples.<sup>6</sup> The cousin of the French king, Louis of Clermont, was originally appointed to lead this expedition, but he was replaced in October 1334 by Hugh Quiéret, a royal advisor and the seneschal of Beaucaire and Nîmes.<sup>7</sup>

In March 1335, two months after his coronation, Benedict XII wrote to Robert of Naples reiterating the appeal made by John XXII in the previous year. He informed Robert that after hearing of the ‘terrible oppression’ inflicted by the Turks on the Christians of *Romania*, he had met with the representatives of the French king, the Hospitallers, and the Venetians at Avignon to expedite preparations for the new crusade.<sup>8</sup> To demonstrate his support for this campaign, Benedict ordered the construction of four papal galleys in Marseille to supplement five more hired by Philip VI in Marseille and Nice. According to the sources, these galleys were to set out for Rhodes in mid-May, where they would serve in the Aegean for five months against the Turks in a campaign separate from the Holy Land

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<sup>6</sup> The exact numbers of ships are: sixteen horse transports from Philip VI; four horse transports and six galleys from Hugh of Cyprus; four horse transports and four galleys from Robert of Naples; ten galleys from Venice; and six galleys each from the Hospitallers and the Byzantine emperor. *Lettres secrètes et curiales du pape Jean XXII*, iv, doc. 5485 (19 May 1334); also see docs 5406, 5412; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 26; C.J. Tyerman, ‘Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land’, *English Historical Review*, 100 (1985), 25–52, at 37–8. Contrary to the claim of Deno Geanakoplos, there is no evidence to suggest that in 1335 the Byzantine emperor agreed to participate in the general passage to the Holy Land: D.J. Geanakoplos, ‘Byzantium and the Crusades, 1261–1354’, in *History of the Crusades*, ed. K.M. Setton, 6 vols (Wisconsin, 1969–89), iii, 27–68, at 53. According to Nikephoros Gregoras, Emperor Andronikos III did arm twenty ships in 1335–36, but these were not designated for the Holy Land crusade; nor were they ever used in a naval league: N. Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. L. Schopen and I. Bekker, 3 vols (Bonn, 1829–55), i, 524–5.

<sup>7</sup> *Lettres secrètes et curiales du pape Jean XXII*, iv, doc. 5485; J. Delaville le Roulx, *La France en Orient au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 2 vols (Paris, 1886), i, 101.

<sup>8</sup> BXII: *France*, doc. 28; *Annales Ecclesiastici*, ed. C. Baronio et al., 37 vols (Paris, 1608–1883), xxv, 31 (ch. 29); F. Giunta, ‘Benedetto XII e la crociata’, *Anuario de estudios medievales*, 3 (1966), 215–34, at 217–8.

crusade, at a total cost of 11,500 florins.<sup>9</sup> The next month Benedict issued indulgences *in articulo mortis* to the captain-general Hugh Quiéret and to those who were to accompany him on the expedition, providing that they were contrite of heart and had made oral confession.<sup>10</sup>

At this time, Benedict XII also lent support to John XXII's other crusade plan, the general passage being organized by Philip VI to the Holy Land. In January 1335, the pope confirmed his predecessor's bulls relating to the crusade, including the continuation of the clerical tenth for the expedition.<sup>11</sup> In many senses it is not surprising that Benedict agreed to support this crusade. The initial preparations had already been set in place by John XXII and King Philip, the Turks were experiencing difficulties in *Romania*, and, most importantly, a crusade to the Holy Land could be used as a means of distracting the Christian rulers from their quarrels in the West.<sup>12</sup> This last point is crucial to understanding Benedict's attitude to the crusade at this time. As has been shown, the second wave of the naval league and the planned Holy Land crusade had attracted the combined participation of the kings of France

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<sup>9</sup> BXII: *France*, docs 28, 40, 54; BXII: *Communes*, i, doc. 2467; A. Jal, *Archéologie navale*, 2 vols (Paris, 1840), ii, 326–33. The cost of the galleys was affordable considering that John XXII had left the papal camera with a considerable surplus of around 750,000 florins: N. Housley, *The Italian Crusades: The papal-Angevin alliance and the crusades against Christian lay powers, 1254–1343* (Oxford, 1982), 250–1. Helen Jenkins has claimed that this flotilla was linked to the Holy Land crusade, but the sources do not indicate that this was the case: H. Jenkins, 'Papal Efforts for Peace under Benedict XII: 1334–1342', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania (1933), 24. The correct sequence and destination of these campaigns is given by Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 28.

<sup>10</sup> ASV, Reg. Vat. 119, fols 132–3, docs 343–8 (esp. docs 343–4, 347); summaries in BXII: *Communes*, i, docs 2247–50, 2253. The bulls issuing the indulgences are almost word-for-word copies of those issued to the previous captain-general, John of Cepoy, on 19 May 1334: ASV, Reg. Av. 46, fol. 560v; Reg. Vat. 107, fol. 243r, docs 729–30; summaries in *Jean XXII: lettres communes*, xiii, docs 63170–1.

<sup>11</sup> BXII: *Communes*, i, docs 2453, 2466, 2469; BXII: *France*, docs 19, 66.

<sup>12</sup> Jenkins, 'Papal Efforts for Peace', 23–5; Tyerman, 'Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land', 45.

and Cyprus, the Venetians, and the Hospitallers. Furthermore, the pope had made attempts to persuade Robert of Naples to take part. It is likely that Benedict even considered these crusades as a means of encouraging enemies of the Church, such as Louis of Bavaria and the Visconti of Milan, to reconcile themselves to the Holy See.<sup>13</sup> Matthew Visconti had, after all, pledged to go on crusade in 1321, and Louis of Bavaria included the promise of crusade participation in a peace proposal offered to Benedict in October 1336, which suggests that the political enemies of the papacy also viewed the crusade as a route towards reconciliation.<sup>14</sup> When these factors are considered, it is not surprising that Benedict made initial efforts to support the crusades initially planned by his predecessor, even if these were to be scrapped in the following year.

### **Crusade Planning in 1335–1336: Diversion and Abandonment**

The French fleet under the command of Hugh Quiéret was still on course to be dispatched to Rhodes and the Aegean in the spring of 1335, but only a few months later the political situation in France shifted dramatically when Edward III of England launched a naval expedition against Scotland, the traditional ally of the French king. Philip made plans to intervene on behalf of the Scots, and in early 1336, whilst at Marseille, he unveiled a fleet to be sent to the English Channel. This was to be commanded by Hugh Quiéret and included those galleys which had been originally designated for action against the Turks. By prioritizing the war against the English, Philip terminated his commitment to the anti-Turkish

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<sup>13</sup> This conformed with the conciliatory attitude adopted by Benedict towards Louis and the Italian Ghibellines: see Chapter 6 by Sylvain Parent in this volume, as well as G. Mollat, *The Popes at Avignon: 1305–1378*, trans. J. Love (London, 1963), 110–19, 221–4; Jenkins, ‘Papal Efforts for Peace’, 22–3.

<sup>14</sup> Housley, *Italian Crusades*, 80, 84–5.

enterprise and effectively ended any hopes of a second wave of the naval league sailing to the Aegean. After this point the papal galleys also failed to leave Marseille for the East.<sup>15</sup>

At this stage, the preparations for Philip VI's general passage to the Holy Land began to founder as well, predictably on the grounds of finance and the emerging Anglo-French war. For the papacy and the French Crown, this was a repeat of the same wrangling which had continually hindered crusade plans in the past. Philip required security with England and sufficient Church finance before fully committing to a general passage, but Benedict was unwilling to allow the tenth to be used for purposes not directly linked with the crusade, especially when Europe was in such a state of disorder. Even if the French considered their own security as an integral prerequisite for the general passage, the papacy had shown that it was unwilling to grant Church tenths for the defence of France or allow Philip access to any tithes levied on the Church outside of his kingdom.<sup>16</sup> By 1336 these disputes had ground negotiations to a halt, and in March Benedict wrote to the king that all preparations for the general passage and the crusade tenths associated with it were being cancelled. Echoing John XXII's words in the early 1320s, Benedict informed the king that the crusade had been cancelled because of the situation in Europe – England and Scotland were in perpetual

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<sup>15</sup> *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, ed. J. Viard, Société de l'Histoire de France, 10 vols (Paris, 1820–53), v, 364; C.M. de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, 5 vols (Paris, 1889–1920), i, 389–91; E. Déprez, *Les préliminaires de la guerre de cent ans: la papauté, la France et l'Angleterre (1328–1342)* (Paris, 1902), 127; Tyerman, 'Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land', 46–7. For the contrasting priorities of the pope and King Philip with regard to the Anglo-French conflict, see Mollat, *The Popes at Avignon*, 252.

<sup>16</sup> For this in general see Jenkins, 'Papal Efforts for Peace', 5–25, 34–5; Tyerman, 'Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land', 42–5.



conflict and Germany was at war, while Tuscany, Lombardy, Apulia, and Sicily were all in a state of anarchy.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout the greater part of 1335 Benedict had clearly supported the crusades originally planned by John XXII, partly because the processes had already been set in motion by the previous pope and partly because Benedict realized that a successful crusade would help maintain peace within Christendom, especially by diverting French attention from the Anglo-Scottish conflict.<sup>18</sup> Philip VI's decision to help the Scottish against the English in late 1335 and his diversion of Hugh Quiéret's crusade fleet to the English Channel put an end to this and ultimately forced Benedict to cancel the Holy Land crusade. After this point, as Tyerman has suggested, the crusade was considered by Benedict as separate from attempts to gain peace in the West, and consequently all plans for it were shelved.<sup>19</sup> The pope's attitude towards the crusade was in many ways indicative of his personal priorities, which lay in internal Church reform and the defence of orthodoxy rather than international diplomacy and the defence of Christendom from the infidel, both of which had been skilfully pursued by

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<sup>17</sup> *Lettres secrètes et curiales du pape Jean XXII*, i, doc. 1227; BXII: *Pays autres*, doc. 786; *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland: papal letters (1198–1513)*, ed. W.H. Bliss et al., Irish Manuscripts Commission, 19 vols (London and Dublin, 1893–1998, in progress), ii, doc. 560 (also published in Déprez, *Les préliminaires de la guerre de cent ans*, 410–13). In November–December 1336 the collection of the crusade tenth was cancelled and it was decreed that the proceeds be restored to the Church: BXII: *France*, docs 240, 251, 280; BXII: *Communes*, ii, docs 3954–5, 3998–9, 5139–40, 6302. Also see J.B. Henneman, *Royal Taxation in Fourteenth-Century France: the development of war financing, 1322–1356* (Princeton NJ, 1971), 107; Jenkins, 'Papal Efforts for Peace', 23–5; Déprez, *Les préliminaires de la guerre de cent ans*, 123–4; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 29, 180–1; Tyerman, 'Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land', 45–7.

<sup>18</sup> See Jenkins, 'Papal Efforts for Peace', 23.

<sup>19</sup> Tyerman, 'Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land', 45; Jenkins, 'Papal Efforts for Peace', 23–5.

John XXII. This reflects the personality of Benedict, who as Jacques Fournier was an ascetic Cistercian, a scrupulous inquisitor, and a renowned theologian.

As other chapters in this volume have shown, especially that of Elizabeth Sherman, during his time as bishop of Pamiers he had ardently pursued Waldensian, Catharist, and Spiritual heretics, and had been placed in charge of the appeals of the Inquisition at Avignon by John XXII.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, as a cardinal, Benedict had participated in important theological debates where he propagated his commitment to the defence of Roman doctrine and orthodoxy.<sup>21</sup> When elected pope, it therefore comes as no surprise that Benedict turned his attention to reforming the religious orders and implementing strict discipline within the Church, rather than the pursuit of the external threat in the East.<sup>22</sup> This commitment to reforming the Church from within, coupled with the problems hindering the crusade plans in 1335–1336, provide the reasons for why those designs were dropped and why a new crusade to the East was not fostered during his pontificate.

## **Crusading in the East, 1335–1342**

### *1. Papal Relations with Cyprus, Cilician Armenia, and the Latin Aegean Powers*

The collapse of the crusade plans of 1335–1336 did not, however, mark the end of joint Christian resistance against the Turks in the Aegean, or the requests for papal aid from the Latins of the East. But, unlike his predecessor, Benedict did not go to great lengths to support the defence of Christian territories in *Romania*; instead, when he did take action this was

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<sup>20</sup> See E. Sherman, 'Jacques Fournier and Thirteenth-Century Inquisitorial Methods', [insert pages].

<sup>21</sup> For more on this, see the Introduction to this book [insert pages], as well as the contributions by C. Trottmann, 'Benedict XII and the Beatific Vision' and S. Piron, 'Recovering a Theological Advice by Jacques Fournier', [insert pages].

<sup>22</sup> For more on the career and character of Jacques Fournier, see the Introduction to this volume [pages], together with Mollat, *The Popes at Avignon*, 26–36 and Jenkins, 'Papal Efforts for Peace', 15–7.

usually haphazard in nature or driven by his overriding concern over false doctrine. As has been shown already, the Latins of the Aegean had managed to establish a semi-united front against the Turks by the early 1330s, which had attracted significant support from the papacy of John XXII as well as from Philip VI of France. In addition to this, the two kingdoms of Cyprus and Cilician Armenia had also come under increasing pressure from the Turks of Anatolia, as well as from the Mongols to the east, and the Mamluks in the south, who were threatening both kingdoms from their northernmost lands in Syria.<sup>23</sup> In fact, both Cyprus and Armenia were closely linked to the crusading projects supported by John XXII in the Aegean. King Hugh IV of Cyprus, for example, had contributed to the naval league of 1333–1334, whilst the follow-up wave of the same expedition was initially envisaged as a means of bringing aid to Cilician Armenia, before its cancellation.<sup>24</sup>

Given the close links established between the Curia and Armenia over the planned expeditions to the East, it comes as no surprise that King Leo V continued to appeal to the papacy for aid after the accession of Benedict XII. Initially the pope showed a willingness to heed the warnings of the Armenian king, and was even willing to grant him a plenary

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<sup>23</sup> For more on Cyprus and Cilician Armenia during this period, see N. Coureas, *The Latin Church in Cyprus: 1313–1378* (Nicosia, 2010), 97–179; P.W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades: 1191–1374* (Cambridge, 1991), 101–41; G.F. Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 4 vols (Cambridge, 1940–52), ii, 192–303; M.-A. Chevalier, *Les ordres religieux-militaires en Arménie cilicienne: templiers, hospitaliers, teutoniques et Arméniens à l'époque des croisades* (Paris, 2009), 573–678; J.G. Ghazarian, *The Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia during the Crusades: the integration of Cilician Armenians with the Latins, 1080–1393* (Richmond, 2000), 157–68; A.T. Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers' Interventions in Cilician Armenia: 1271–1375', in *The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia*, ed. T.S.R. Boase (Edinburgh, 1978), 118–48. Jacob of Verona provides a rich account of Armenian refugees seeking shelter in Famagusta after an attack from the Mamluk sultan in the summer of 1335: Jacob of Verona, *Liber Peregrinationis*, ed. U. Monneret de Villard (Rome, 1950), 17–8.

<sup>24</sup> See *Lettres secrètes et curiales du pape Jean XXII*, iv, doc. 5412.

indulgence in 1335 to cover all the occasions where he had fought against Muslims.<sup>25</sup> But after the cancellation of the second wave of the naval league and the Holy Land crusade of Philip VI, the provisional plans to bring aid to Armenia made in connection to these campaigns were also abandoned. Even a suggestion made by Philip that some of the crusade tithe should be sent to Armenia to help ease the famine caused by a Mamluk invasion in 1335 was rejected by the pope, who argued that the money could only be used for the crusade.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, in April 1336, at Philip's behest, Benedict eventually agreed to allocate 10,000 florins for the purchase of grain to be sent to Armenia to alleviate the famine.<sup>27</sup> By this time the situation in Armenia had reached a critical point and the pope, possibly in an attempt to compensate for the cancellation of earlier plans to bring aid, wrote to the clergy of the East that plenary indulgences should be granted to all the Christian faithful from Sicily, Cyprus, Rhodes, Negroponte, and the other Christian islands of the Eastern Mediterranean who would fight for the Armenians for one year or send equivalent soldiers and money for their aid.<sup>28</sup>

In the context of other indulgences granted at this time, this constituted a very liberal spiritual privilege. In fact these indulgences were more generous than those issued for fighting the Turks in Greece and the Aegean by John XXII in the 1320s, and than those issued to the participants of the naval league in 1334 and 1335. These indulgences were only awarded *in articulo mortis* – that is, for death on campaign or thereafter from wounds

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<sup>25</sup> *Acta Benedicti XII*, doc. 5. Cf. BXII: *France*, doc. 55.

<sup>26</sup> Tyerman, 'Philip VI and the Recovery of the Holy Land', 47.

<sup>27</sup> BXII: *France*, doc. 155; Y. Renouard, 'Une expédition de céréales des Pouilles en Arménie par les Bardi pour le compte de Benoît XII', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, 53 (1936), 287–329.

<sup>28</sup> BXII: *France*, docs 175–6 (1 May); BXII: *Communes*, i, doc. 3971. Also see Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 34–5; Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, ii, 299; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 30. This is also discussed in Irene Bueno's chapter of this book, 'Benedict XII and the *partes Orientis*', [pages].

received.<sup>29</sup> However, despite this move it can be assumed from the silence of the sources in regard to these indulgences, and from the continued requests for aid from Armenia, that this papal initiative was largely ineffective.

Although it would be harsh to underplay the concern of the pope towards Armenia at this time, it seems that by abandoning the crusade plans of his predecessor, Benedict had effectively replaced a coherent policy with one that lacked the careful organization and consistency required to be successful.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, when potential theological differences with the Armenians emerged, especially concerns over false doctrine, the pope showed that he was willing to break off his assistance. This occurred in 1341 when, after hearing of widespread errors within the Armenian Church, Benedict insisted that King Leo convene a council of prelates to enforce Catholic teaching and refused to send aid to the kingdom until orthodoxy was restored.<sup>31</sup> Bearing this in mind it is clear that the defence of Christian territory from the infidel was not always the primary concern of the Curia during the pontificate of Benedict XII.

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<sup>29</sup> In 1322 for fighting the Greeks, Bulgars, Alans, and Turks in the principality of Achaia: Reg. Av. 18, fol. 152v; Reg. Vat. 74, fol. 93v, doc. 209; summaries in *Jean XXII. Lettres communes*, iv, doc. 16672; in 1323 and 1325 for fighting against the Turks near Chios: L. Gatto, 'Per la storia di Martino Zaccaria, signore di Chio', *Bulletino dell' "Archivio Paleografico Italiano"*, NS 2–3, part 1 (1956–7), 325–45, at 344–5 (Appendix doc. 5); summaries in *Jean XXII. Lettres communes*, iv, doc. 16977, v, doc. 22117. For the naval league in 1334: Reg. Av. 46, fol. 560v; Reg. Vat. 107, fol. 243r, doc. 729–30; summaries in *Jean XXII. Lettres communes*, xiii, docs 63170–1. For the naval league in 1335: Reg. Vat. 119, fols 132–3, docs 343–8; summaries in BXII: *Communes*, i, docs 2247–50, 2253. For a discussion of indulgences issued for crusading in this period, see Carr, *Merchant Crusaders*, 107–18.

<sup>30</sup> This point is strongly made by Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 30.

<sup>31</sup> BXII: *Pays autres*, docs 3149–55 (1 August); *Acta Benedicti XII*, docs 55–6; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 31.

In regard to Cyprus, Benedict on occasion heeded the advice of Hugh IV, but he crucially failed to provide any lasting support for the island. In the build-up to the Holy Land crusade of Philip VI, Hugh had asked the pope to cancel preaching in Cyprus on the basis that it would incite the Muslims on the Anatolian mainland, especially the Turks of Hamid and Karaman whom the king was busy fighting against.<sup>32</sup> Benedict recognized the potential problem, and ordered Cypriot prelates that preaching for the general passage was prohibited and could only recommence once the crusade was ready.<sup>33</sup> In the end these measures turned out to be unnecessary as the crusade was cancelled by the pope shortly after, but they nevertheless demonstrate Benedict's awareness of the precarious position of Cyprus and the priorities of the king, which lay in the defence of his realm from the neighbouring Muslim states and not in the immediate recovery of the Holy Land. This was mirrored by Hugh's aggressive military strategy against the Turks in these years which resulted in at least two major sea battles: the first in August 1336 when a fleet of twenty-four Cypriot galleys and other vessels defeated a Turkish force; and the second in the following July, when another flotilla numbering over twenty galleys managed to defeat a Turkish fleet and kill a prominent captain.<sup>34</sup> In addition, the travel writer Ludolf of Sudheim reported that by the early 1340s, the king of Cyprus had been so successful against the Turks of southern Asia Minor that he had forced many of the coastal towns to pay him tribute.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> N. Housley, 'Cyprus and the Crusades, 1291–1571', in *Cyprus and the Crusades: papers given at the international conference 'Cyprus and the Crusades'*, ed. N. Coureas and J. Riley-Smith (Nicosia, 1995), 187–206, at 192.

<sup>33</sup> BXII: *Pays autres*, docs 732–3 (3 January); Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, ii, 299; Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 157.

<sup>34</sup> *Liber pontificalis*, ii, 527 (Appendix 1). Carr, *Merchant Crusaders*, 102–3.

<sup>35</sup> Ludolf von Sudheim, *Description of the Holy Land, and of the Way Thither*, trans. A. Stewart, Library of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, 12 (London, 1895), 44; Coureas, *The Latin Church in Cyprus*, 100.

It is interesting to note that Benedict XII was not ignorant of these achievements; indeed, in early 1338 he wrote to the king praising his 'glorious victory against the Turks'.<sup>36</sup> But despite this verbal encouragement, Benedict showed no interest in promoting a crusade against the Turks in the region as John XXII had, or of offering any other form of papal assistance in the defence of the kingdom. In fact, the indulgences granted in support of Armenia in 1336 were the sole papal privileges offered to the faithful from Cyprus, but they may have actually hindered the defence of this kingdom as they were only permitted to those who would fight against the Mamluks in Cilician Armenia, and not against the Turks near the island.<sup>37</sup> Thus Benedict, whether deliberately or not, was potentially diverting men and resources from the Cypriot theatre towards Cilician Armenia and further east.<sup>38</sup>

If the policies of Benedict XII towards Armenia had a potentially negative effect on the defence of Cyprus, then for the very same reasons they were also detrimental to the struggle against the Turks further north in the Aegean. By cancelling the second wave of the naval league in 1336 the pope had already demonstrated that a crusading campaign in the Aegean would not receive his support, and in the following years he took further steps to distance himself from the activities of the Latin powers of the region. A good example of this can be found in the attitude of the pope towards the Knights Hospitaller of Rhodes, especially the restriction of finances made available to the order for their overseas activities, such as in May 1336 when Benedict refused to help finance a joint Hospitaller–Venetian fleet for the

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<sup>36</sup> BXII: *Pays autres*, doc. 1673 (9 February 1338); the letter is also published in *Annales Ecclesiastici*, xxv, 140 (ch. 72). See also Coureas, *The Latin Church in Cyprus*, 100; Delaville le Roulx, *France en Orient*, i, 91; Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, ii, 299; Giunta, 'Benedetto XII e la crociata', 230.

<sup>37</sup> BXII: *France*, doc. 175, 116–7.

<sup>38</sup> This point is also made by Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 35.

Aegean.<sup>39</sup> One explanation for this may be found in the deteriorating stability of the Italian banking houses during the 1330s. The Hospitallers and the papacy shared the same Florentine banks, and since the late 1320s the order had amassed significant credit with the struggling companies, which Benedict was understandably unwilling for them to expend on a prolonged campaign against the Turks.<sup>40</sup> Considering these factors it comes as little surprise that a year later Venice made peace with the Turks of Aydin and Monteshe on the western coast of Asia Minor, whilst the Hospitallers seem to have also withdrawn from intensive military activity in the region.<sup>41</sup>

## 2. *Crusades against the Catalans of Athens*

In 1311 the Catalan Company killed Duke Walter I of Brienne at the battle of Halmyros and captured the Duchy of Athens, after which they were excommunicated and targeted in a number of campaigns initiated by the papacy, along with the Frankish lords of Achaia and the titular duke, Walter II of Brienne. John XXII had been particularly hostile towards the

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<sup>39</sup> Venice, Archivio di Stato, Deliberazioni Misti del Senato 17, fol. 60v; *Venezia-senato: deliberazioni miste*, ed. F.-X. Leduc et al., 20 vols (Venice, 2004–), vol. 4 (*Register XVII, 1335–1339*), 250–2, docs 664–7. The Venetian and Rhodian ships did still assemble at Crete in the summer of 1336, but they disbanded after failing to receive any further support from the West: A.T. Luttrell, ‘Venice and the Knights Hospitallers of Rhodes in the Fourteenth Century’, in idem, *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece, and the West, 1291–1440*, Collected Studies, 77 (Aldershot, 1978), item V, 203.

<sup>40</sup> For more on this, see A.T. Luttrell, ‘The Hospitallers and their Florentine Bankers: 1306–1346’, in idem, *Studies on the Hospitallers after 1306* (Aldershot, 2007), item VI, 21–2; A.T. Luttrell, ‘The Hospitallers at Rhodes: 1306–1421’, in *The Hospitallers in Cyprus, Rhodes, Greece, and the West*, item I, 293–4; M. Carr, ‘The Hospitallers of Rhodes and their Alliances against the Turks’, in *Islands and Military Orders, c.1291–1798*, ed. S. Phillips and E. Buttigieg (Farnham, 2013), 172–3; E.S. Hunt, *The Medieval Super Companies: a study of the Peruzzi company of Florence* (Cambridge, 1994), 134–9, 234–5.

<sup>41</sup> Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 35–8.



Company by supporting numerous Angevin attempts to recover Athens in the 1320s, and even going as far as to preach a crusade against them on behalf of Walter II in 1330.<sup>42</sup> For the majority of his pontificate Benedict XII maintained the same aggressive strategy towards the Catalans of Athens as that adopted by his predecessor, which, on the one hand, shows that he was not completely disinterested in affairs in Frankish Greece and the Aegean but, on the other, suggests that his priorities lay in supporting the Brienne claim and opposing a renegade Catholic group rather than defending the region from Turkish incursions.

Benedict took his first action against the Company early in his pontificate, in December 1335, when he ordered the archbishop of Patras, Guillaume Frangipani, to excommunicate the Catalans.<sup>43</sup> This came after they had failed to comply with a papal demand issued by John XXII in the previous year that the Company restore Athens to Walter II or suffer ecclesiastical punishment.<sup>44</sup> In the following years, the pope continued to support the dynastic ambitions of Walter II by opening up negotiations for another campaign to Greece; but support for this proved to be lacklustre, especially from Venice and the other Aegean powers who, preoccupied with the Turks, refused to contribute to any Brienne

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<sup>42</sup> For a background to the Catalan conquest of Athens, see D. Jacoby, 'Catalans, Turcs et Vénitiens en Romanie (1305–1332): un nouveau témoignage de Marino Sanudo Torsello', *Studi Medievali*, 15.1 (1974), 217–61; K.M. Setton, 'The Avignonese Papacy and the Catalan Duchy of Athens', *Byzantion*, 17 (1944–45), 281–303; idem, *Catalan Domination of Athens, 1311–1388* (Cambridge, MA, 1948), 1–44; idem, 'The Catalans in Greece, 1311–1380', in *A History of the Crusades*, iii, 167–224.

<sup>43</sup> R.-J. Loenertz, 'Athènes et Néopatras: régestes et documents pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des Duchés catalans (1311–1395)', *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 28 (1958), doc. 65 (29 December).

<sup>44</sup> *Diplomatari de l'Orient català, 1301–1409: col·lecció de documents per a la història de l'expedició catalana a Orient i dels ducats d'Atenes i Neopàtria*, ed. A. Rubió i Lluch, *Memòries de la Secció Històrico-Arqueològica*, 56 (Barcelona, 1947; repr. Barcelona, 2001), doc. 158 (12 August 1334, incorrectly dated to 1333); *Jean XXII: lettres communes*, xiii, doc. 63752.

expedition to the Morea.<sup>45</sup> Attitudes on the ground towards the Catalans may have also begun to soften in these years, as is indicated by the actions of Archbishop Isnard of Thebes, who had celebrated Mass in the presence of the Catalans and published a declaration relaxing their ban of excommunication, without official papal approval. Isnard was probably motivated by the high numbers of Catalan apostates to Greek Orthodoxy who felt alienated from the Roman Church by repeated ecclesiastical censure, but Benedict nevertheless maintained his hard-line stance, summoning the archbishop to Avignon to face trial for his misdemeanours in 1339.<sup>46</sup>

In the past the papacy had justified military action against the Catalans on the basis that they had allied with the ‘infidel’ Turks and ‘schismatic’ Greeks against the Latins in Greece and the Aegean.<sup>47</sup> As a result of the papal–Brienne preparations to launch another expedition to the Morea in 1335–1336, the Catalan Company continued this policy and called on Umur Pasha of Aydin, the lord of Smyrna, to provide them with military assistance against the potential invasion. In the end, the reinforcements were not needed as the campaign never materialized, but nevertheless there is evidence that a Turkish force did sail

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<sup>45</sup> Venice refused to assist Walter, except to grant him permission to use state galleys to sail from Italy to Clarentza, on the north-western coast of the Morea: *Diplomatari de l'Orient català*, docs 162–3 (4 November 1335), 165 (11 March 1336).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., doc. 168 (16 March 1339, incorrectly dated to 15 March 1338), also printed in BXII: *Communes*, ii, doc. 7420; summary in Loenertz, ‘Athènes et Neopatras’, doc. 70. The trial was initiated by Walter II of Brienne, who had requested that Isnard be denounced for failing to enforce the previous excommunication on the Company: *Diplomatari de l'Orient català*, doc. 167 (15 March 1337); BXII: *Communes*, i, doc. 5214; summary in Loenertz, ‘Athènes et Néopatras’, doc. 66. See also Setton, ‘The Avignonese Papacy and the Catalan Duchy of Athens’, 287, 294–5; Giunta, ‘Benedetto XII e la crociata’, 230.

<sup>47</sup> See; E.A. Zachariadou, ‘The Catalans of Athens and the beginning of Turkish Expansion in the Aegean Area’, *Studi Medievali*, 21/2 (1980), 821–38.

to Athens in support of the Catalans.<sup>48</sup> Considering this evidence, and the Catalan record of allying with the Turks in the past, it is surprising to learn that Benedict XII did not make much of the Catalan–Turkish alliance in his bulls ordering their excommunication. In one letter, that of 1339 instructing Archbishop Isnard return to Avignon, the pope accused the Catalans of forging a partnership with the ‘schismatics, Turks, and other enemies of the Christian faith’, but this accusation is almost a word-for-word copy of that used by John XXII in a bull issued in 1334, which, in turn, was a repeat of the rhetoric used in letters condemning the Catalans dating back to 1312.<sup>49</sup> In this regard, Benedict was only repeating and not elaborating on the accusations made by earlier popes, which in many senses is indicative of his policy towards the Catalans at this time; one which was a rigid continuation of that of his predecessors and completely out of touch with the changing situation in the Aegean region.

Benedict did, however, eventually relax his policy towards the Catalans, once it had become clear that Walter of Brienne was not going to succeed in recovering his kingdom. This change in stance came about in February 1341 when Benedict instructed the Catalans to send their officials to Avignon, after hearing that they wished to seek reconciliation with the Church. The pope died shortly after this and little more is known of this embassy, but Benedict did mention that their reconciliation could assist in the defence of the faith, a clear indication that peace with the Company was now considered as integral for the protection of

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<sup>48</sup> Enveri, *Le destān d’Umūr Pacha (Düstūr-nāme-i Enverī)*, trans. I. Mélikoff-Sayar (Paris, 1954), verses 1085–118; Lemerle, *L’Émirat d’Aydın*, 122.

<sup>49</sup> *Diplomatari de l’Orient català*, docs 168 (1339) and 158 (1334). For earlier examples, see *Regestum Clementis Papae V*, ed. Monks of the Order of St Benedict, 10 vols (Rome, 1885–92), vii, docs 7890–91 (1312), ix, docs 10166–67 (1314); *Diplomatari de l’Orient català*, docs 63, 66 (1314), 94 (1318), 120 (1322).

Latin interests in Greece.<sup>50</sup> It is likely that this change of attitude paved the way for Clement VI to seek a rapprochement with the Company in preparation for the Crusade of Smyrna in 1343, after which he even asked for their participation in the follow-up campaign led by Humbert of Viennois in 1346.<sup>51</sup>

### 3. Relations with Byzantium

Since the failure of Latin attempts to recover Constantinople during the pontificate of Clement V, there had been a gradual process of reconciliation with the Byzantine emperors under John XXII. In 1327 initial negotiations were even undertaken over the possible union of the Greek and Latin Churches, and in 1332 Emperor Andronikos III agreed to contribute to the naval league being planned against the Turks, although in the end no Byzantine galleys took part.<sup>52</sup> By the time of Benedict XII's pontificate, Byzantium was widely considered by

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<sup>50</sup> BXII: *France*, doc. 810 (10 February 1341); *Diplomatari de l'Orient català*, doc. 177; Loenertz, 'Athènes et Néopatras', doc. 74; Giunta, 'Benedetto XII e la crociata', 230.

<sup>51</sup> *Diplomatari de l'Orient català*, docs 182–3 (21 October 1343 and 1 April 1344); *Lettres closes, patentes et curiales du pape Clément VI se rapportant à la France*, ed. E. Déprez et al., Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 3rd Ser., 3 vols (Paris, 1901–61), i, docs 465, 1608; Loenertz, 'Athènes et Néopatras', doc. 81. Clement VI announced that he was willing to suspend for three years the sentences of excommunication and interdict imposed on the Company if they agreed to contribute 100 infantry and 100 cavalry to Humbert's force for three years: *Lettres closes, patentes et curiales du pape Clément VI se rapportant à la France*, i, doc. 2580, col. 183. Letters were written to the archbishops of Thebes and Patras ordering them to relax the ecclesiastical penalties if the Catalans fulfilled their share of the agreement: *Diplomatari de l'Orient català*, doc. 189. For more on negotiations with the Catalans during the crusade of Smyrna, see M. Carr, 'Humbert of Viennois and the Crusade of Smyrna: a reconsideration', *Crusades* 13 (2014), 237–51.

<sup>52</sup> See J. Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy, 1198–1400* (New Brunswick NJ, 1979), 188–96; A.E. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins: the foreign policy of Andronicus II, 1282–1328* (Cambridge MA, 1972), 284–326; Geanakoplos, 'Byzantium and the Crusades', 44–53.

the crusading powers as a potential ally in the defence of the East from the Turks, or even for a campaign to liberate the Holy Land, but often doctrinal issues hampered any negotiations. As we have seen, Benedict XII showed a strong desire to combat false doctrine, often over the defence of the faith against the infidel. Thus his policy towards Byzantium had a profound influence on his ability or willingness to launch a crusading enterprise in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In 1337 Andronikos III made overtures to the West by dispatching the Venetian ambassador, Stephen Dandolo, followed by the Calabrian monk Barlaam (in 1339), to the papal Curia to reopen discussions over Church union. Their mission was twofold: to convince the pope to hold a general council to discuss the *Filioque* question; and to secure aid for the recovery of the Byzantine provinces of Asia Minor which had been overrun by the Turks.<sup>53</sup> The union negotiations are discussed in more detail in Irene Bueno's chapter in this volume, but for now a brief summary will suffice.<sup>54</sup> In short, Barlaam proposed that if the Western powers would agree to help the Christians of the East *before* union was implemented, then Greek minds would be won over, thus making Church union more palatable for the Greek people. He also offered another, less effective strategy in case the first proposals were rejected: that the king of France send aid to *Romania*; that all Greek slaves owned by Latins be freed and the slave trade be stopped; and that the pope should grant the crusade indulgence to all those fighting for the Greeks, helping materially, or who died in war against the Turks. This might win the trust of the Greek people, who would then be more inclined to accept union even without a general council.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 197; Geanakoplos, 'Byzantium and the Crusades', 54–5.

<sup>54</sup> See Bueno, 'Benedict XII and the *partes Orientis*', [pages].

<sup>55</sup> Barlaam's proposals for union have been discussed *ibid.*, [pages]; Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 196–9; Geanakoplos, 'Byzantium and the Crusades', 54–7; Giunta, 'Benedetto XII e la crociata', 230–3; M. Viller, 'La

Considering that Benedict was less than willing to support a campaign against the Turks or to preach indulgences to those fighting against them, it comes as little surprise that all of Barlaam's proposals were declined by the pope and the cardinals at the Curia. With characteristic intractability, Benedict stated that Eastern prelates should be sent to the West for instruction, and not discussion, regardless of Byzantine problems with the Turks.<sup>56</sup> This was obviously unacceptable to the Greeks, and the negotiations soon crumbled without any further progression. The papal decision was neither altogether surprising nor out of character for the period, but these negotiations were of particular consequence because they placed far more emphasis than in previous negotiations on the necessity for aid against the Turks as a prerequisite for Church union than in previous negotiations. In fact, every proposal was conditional on the immediate consignment of help for Andronikos III, and therefore overlooked the specific theological problems which had hindered negotiations in the past.<sup>57</sup> But Benedict, unlike John XXII before him and Clement VI after him, showed a complete inflexibility towards the Greeks because of the theological differences that existed between the two churches. His refusal to implement a crusade against the Turks, despite the specific request of the Byzantines, was, after all, illustrative of where his priorities lay.

#### *4. Crusading Plans Instigated by the Latins of the East, 1341–1342*

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question de l'union des églises entre grecs et latins depuis le concile de Lyon jusqu'à celui de Florence (1274–1438)', *RHE*, 18 (1922), 20–60, at 20–6. The relevant documents are published in *Annales Ecclesiastici*, xxv, 159–64 (chs 19–32); *Acta Benedicti XII*, docs 42–3; *Benoît XII (1334–1342): Lettres closes, patentes et curiales*, ed. Daumet, docs 634–5.

<sup>56</sup> *Annales Ecclesiastici*, xxv, 162–3 (ch. 28); Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy*, 198; Geanakoplos, 'Byzantium and the Crusades', 56; Viller, 'L'union des églises', 23.

<sup>57</sup> Giunta, 'Benedetto XII e la crociata', 231.

Up to this point, this discussion of Benedict XII's eastern policy has confirmed a number of things. The pope was made aware of the Turkish attacks in *Romania* by the appeals of the Latins of the Aegean, together with the Armenians, Cypriots, and Byzantines; but on the rare occasions when he did take action, as in regard to Cilician Armenia in 1336, this took the form of a stop-gap measure and lacked any continuity. More often than not, aid was not forthcoming because this hinged on ensuring the orthodoxy of the Christians of the East, such as Armenians, Byzantines, and Catalans, even though some form of reconciliation had been made with the latter towards the end of Benedict's pontificate. The Turks, in particular, were low on his agenda. Benedict made no effort to support the anti-Turkish cause in the Aegean, and he possibly weakened it by granting indulgences to those fighting the Mamluks in Cilician Armenia, but not against the Turks elsewhere. Moreover, he refused to help fund a Venetian–Hospitaller fleet for the defence of the Aegean, and placed doctrinal issues ahead of any concerns over the Turks in his negotiations with the Byzantine emperor.

The inactivity of the pope in regard to the Turkish threat led to the Latin states of the East adopting their own strategies independent of papal support and guidance. In 1337 Venice agreed peace treaties with the Turks of Aydin and Menteshe. These secured various trade privileges for the Republic's merchants in the Aegean and crucially allowed them to gain a firmer foothold in the alum trade, previously dominated by the Genoese.<sup>58</sup> Initially the treaties appear to have achieved some degree of security in the region, to the point where the Republic was confident enough to reject a Genoese proposal to form a union against the Turks in 1338.<sup>59</sup> However, these treaties alone did not guarantee secure trade or the safeguarding of Venetian colonies in the Aegean, and within two years Turkish raids against

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<sup>58</sup> Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 35–8. Carr, *Merchant Crusaders*, 126.

<sup>59</sup> R. Lopez, *Su e giù per la storia di Genova* (Genoa, 1975), 89, n. 16; M. Balard, *La Romanie génoise, XII<sup>e</sup>–début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 2 vols (Rome, 1978), ii, 778; Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 36.

Venetian lands had resumed. In April 1340, the situation was so severe that the *Serenissima* was forced to refuse a request from Edward III of England for a subsidy of galleys because the fear of a Turkish armada of 230 sails rendered it impossible to grant any naval assistance.<sup>60</sup> A few months later the Republic considered arming galleys in Crete for the revival of a league against the Turks, although for financial reasons this never materialized.<sup>61</sup> By this time the size of the Turkish armadas had increased to such an extent that the Venetian government began to fear the permanent loss of its Eastern Mediterranean possessions. This is clearly evident in a decree of the Venetian *Maggior Consiglio*, from January 1341, which stated that the Turks were ‘threatening to come with an armada to the island of Crete’, which was the largest and most valuable of the Republic’s possessions overseas.<sup>62</sup>

Fortunately for Venice, other Latin rulers in the East were also eager to stem the incursions of the Turks, most notably Hugh of Cyprus who, despite being successful in protecting his kingdom, was nevertheless eager to secure papal support. In 1341, Hugh took the initiative of dispatching ambassadors to Rhodes and Venice in order to persuade them to

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<sup>60</sup> Summaries in *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy: 1202–1509*, ed. R. Brown et al., 40 vols (London, 1864–1947), i, doc. 25; *I libri commemoriali della Repubblica di Venezia: regesti*, ed. R. Predelli, Monumenti storici pubblicati dalla R. Deputazione Veneta di storia patria, 3, 4 vols (Venice, 1876–83), ii, doc. 489.

<sup>61</sup> ‘Thespismata tês Benetikês gerousias: 1281–1385’, in *Istorika krêtika eggrafa ekdidomena ek tou arheiou tês Benetias*, ed. S.M. Theotokes, 2 vols (Athens, 1933–37), ii.i, 198–200 (bk. 19, docs 9–13); *Duca di Candia: Quaternus consiliorum (1340–1350)*, ed. P. Ratti-Vidulich (Venice, 1976), 5 (doc. 2); Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 41.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Apophaseis meizonos symvouliou Venetias, 1255–1669’, in *Istorika krêtika*, i.ii, 118–9 (doc. 14); summary in F. Thiriet, *Délibérations des assemblées Vénitiennes concernant la Romanie: 1160–1363*, 2 vols (Paris, 1966–1971), i, doc. 480 (full text in Appendix, 309).



join him in appealing to the pope. The ambassador whom Hugh chose was Lambertino Baldwin della Cecca, the bishop of Limassol, who presented to the doge of Venice, Bartolomeo Gradenigo, the following note:

I, the aforementioned Lambert, should explain to your Magnificence my mission to the lord Pope Benedict XII [...] which is in essence the following: [King Hugh] clearly explains to the lord pope the state of Christianity in overseas lands and the grave danger of Christianity itself, which has grown so much and intensified because of the power and wickedness of the Turks, who are destroying, looting, despoiling, and molesting all of the surrounding lands and the people living in them. Unless provision can be made for support by our lord pope and others of the faithful then all of these lands, which will soon be occupied by the Turks, will be destroyed and lost, and all of the Christians dwelling in these same lands will be killed. [The king] beseeches the lord pope so that he will make provision, in consideration of his duty, for suitable support concerning the aforesaid lands, especially since he may want to be involved in this both on his own part and as the head of the whole of Christendom.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> 'Ego Lambertinus supradictus deberem Vestre Magnificencie ambaxiatam exponere, quam ipse mittit per me sanctissimo in Christo patri et domino nostro, domino Benedicto pape XII [...] que ambaxiata in substantia talis est. Videlicet quod ipse significat domino pape statum christianitatis in partibus ultramarinis et ipsius christianitatis grave periculum in quo est propter potentiam et maliciam Turchorum, que in tantum excrevit et ampliata est quod omnes partes circumvicinas et homines in eisdem habitantes dicti Turchi destruunt, vendunt, spoliant ac molestant; sicque nisi per dominum nostrum papam et alios fideles, quos dictum negocium tangit ubicumque consistentes, de remedio provideatur, omnes dicte partes erunt destructe et perditae et in brevi per dictos Turchos occupande, et omnes Christiani destructi in eisdem partibus commorantes; supplicando dicto domino nostro pape, quatenus sibi placeat, super predictis de oportuno remedio intuitu pietatis providere, potissime cum ad ipsum ut ad totius christianitatis caput in huiusmodi spectet remedium adhibere.' The letter is printed in full in M.L. de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan*, 3 vols (Paris, 1852–61), ii, 180–1; summary in *I libri commemoriali*, ii, doc. 563. For more on Lambertino, see Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 158 and references.

In addition, Lambertino informed the doge of Venice that another communication, unfortunately now lost, had been despatched to the master of the Hospitallers, who replied that he had already appealed to the pope and would continue to do so in order to expedite the matter. Finally, Lambert explained that if the doge and the master of the Hospitallers were to join their appeals to those of the king, then Benedict would be ‘more quickly and readily urged’ to offer support ‘on the entreaty of three than of one alone’. In November 1341, the Venetian Senate made a favourable reply to Hugh’s request:

Because the illustrious lord king desires to foreknow our intention, we declare [...] for our part, to offer and do to good effect that which will be right and appropriate in support of so holy an undertaking and service, as true faithful servants and guardians of the holy Christian faith and just as we have always been accustomed to do.<sup>64</sup>

Unfortunately, the appeal of King Hugh came too late and, in April 1342, Benedict XII died before any action could be taken. The pope’s death means that his response to Lambertino’s embassy is unknown, and it is even possible that the embassy never reached the Curia in time. However, Benedict was not unaware of the threat posed by the Turks. As Lambertino’s note shows, the Hospitallers had petitioned the pope for assistance in these years. Moreover,

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<sup>64</sup> ‘Et quia illustris dominus rex optat nostram intencionem pernoscere, decleramus eam [...] ponere et facere cum affectu pro parte nostra id quod convenit et opportunum fuerit in auxilium tam sancti operis, sicut veri fideles et cellatores sancte fidei Christiane et sicut semper sumus facere consueti’; full text in G. Fedalto, *La Chiesa latina in Oriente*, 3 vols (Verona, 1973–8), iii, 51; partial text in Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l’île de Chypre*, ii, 181. Also see Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus*, 158; Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, ii, 299; Carr, *Merchant Crusaders*, 103.

at this time Benedict had also written to the Duke of Naxos commending him for his courageous resistance against the ‘perfidious Turks’.<sup>65</sup>

But, despite his awareness of the Turkish threat, Benedict made no indication that he would alter his eastern policy in accordance. All that we can be sure about is that the unwillingness of the pope to contribute to the defence of Latin lands in the Eastern Mediterranean had ultimately resulted in the Cypriot king taking the initiative himself by appealing to the other Latin powers in the region. In a sense, this was not dissimilar to the formation of the naval league of 1333–1334 where Venice negotiated with the other Christian powers before John XXII finally committed to the expedition. However, apart from the Venetian-led naval league, John had offered support to other Latin lords against the Turks in earlier years.<sup>66</sup> Benedict, in contrast, implemented no alternative strategy for combating them in the Aegean region or elsewhere. The nearest he came to action was to offer aid to Cilician Armenia and to support to some of the Frankish lords against the Catalans, neither of which was made on the grounds of defending the region from Turkish attack.

It will never be known if Benedict planned to send aid to the East in response to Cypriot, Venetian, and Hospitaller requests, but if he had, this would have been a departure from his previous policies. It was not until a new pope, Clement VI, was elected at Avignon in May 1342 that the plans of Hugh of Cyprus were realized. Clement quickly instigated the formation of a new naval league in the Aegean, which would eventually form the first wave of the Crusade of Smyrna. In terms of papal involvement, level of response, and achievement, this was by far the most successful and enthusiastically received crusade of the period.

### **Crusading in Iberia and North-Eastern Europe**

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<sup>65</sup> Reg. Vat. 129, fol. 257, doc. 374; summary in BXII: *Communes*, ii, doc. 8918 (19 May 1341).

<sup>66</sup> See n. 28 above for examples of the indulgences John XXII granted in the 1320s.

Although Benedict XII did little to encourage a crusade to the East, he offered significant support to the Catholic rulers in Iberia and north-eastern Europe in their fight against the enemies of the faith. In the Western Mediterranean during the 1330s, the Marinid sultan at Fez, Abu al-Hasan, had built up considerable forces for an invasion of Iberia. This had in turn forced the Christian rulers across the strait to unite against the inevitable attack and to seek support from the papal Curia. In 1339 the Castilians won a victory over a Marinid force in which the son of Abu al-Hasan was killed, but in the following year a combined Castilian–Aragonese fleet was heavily defeated off Gibraltar. This ensured that the Marinids had control of the strait, over which they crossed in June 1340 to besiege Castilian-held Tarifa with an army numbering around 67,000 men. In October, Alfonso XI of Castile and Alfonso IV of Portugal, along with Aragonese and Portuguese naval support, marched to relieve Tarifa with a much smaller force of 21,000 men. On 30 October, the outnumbered Christian army defeated the Marinids on the bank of the Salado River, marking the greatest victory in the reconquest since Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212. After this, Alfonso marched on Moorish Algeciras, which he besieged for two years until its fall in 1344.<sup>67</sup>

In the early years of his pontificate, Benedict continued the policies of John XXII in regard to Iberia, as he had also done when dealing with the Holy Land crusade of Philip of France and the naval league in the Aegean. His first step was to maintain financial support provided by the Church in the region, by renewing a tenth to Alfonso XI in 1335.<sup>68</sup> However, in distinction to the East where the crusading projects had been quickly abandoned, Benedict

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<sup>67</sup> Villani, iii, 239 (book 12, ch. 120), 372–3 (book 13, ch. 31); O’Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade*, 162–217; A. Huici Miranda, *Las grandes batallas de la reconquista durante las invasiones africanas* (Madrid, 1956; repr. Granada, 2000), 331–87; C.J. Bishko, ‘The Spanish and Portuguese Reconquest, 1095–1492’, in *History of the Crusades*, iii, 396–456, at 437–8.

<sup>68</sup> BXII: *Communes*, i, 2110; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 60.

continued to offer aid for the fight against the Marinids. In 1340, he granted a renewed tenth to Alfonso XI, followed by a similar concession to Alfonso IV of Portugal a year later.<sup>69</sup> At this time the pope even went as far as to order the preaching of a crusade in Castile, León, Aragon, Navarre, and Majorca, with indulgences granted to those who would serve for one year or make an equivalent financial contribution. In addition, Benedict decreed that processions, public sermons, and prayers be made so as to ensure the unity of the Christian armies against the enemies of the faith, and even sent a crusading banner to Alfonso.<sup>70</sup>

There is no doubt that the urgency of the situation triggered by the Marinid invasion helped to unify the Iberian rulers and expedite negotiations with the pope, but, unlike in the East where Christian kingdoms were similarly threatened by the Turks and Mamluks, Benedict's measures in Iberia seem to have had more of an impact. According to the account provided by Giovanni Villani, the support of the Church and papacy was crucial during the siege of Algeciras, especially the tithes granted to the king, which had enabled him to pay for twenty Genoese galleys to patrol the straits, and the indulgences, which resulted in many knights from France, Germany, England, and Languedoc travelling to Iberia to serve in the Christian army for periods of up to six months.<sup>71</sup>

In north-eastern Europe too, Benedict's policies were a far cry from those he implemented in regard to the Christians of *Romania*. In 1339 he granted indulgences in

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<sup>69</sup> BXII: *Communes*, ii, 9139–42; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 60; O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade*, 166–8.

<sup>70</sup> BXII: *Communes*, i, 2862–7; ii, 8355, 9139–42; O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade*, 173–4; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 60–1.

<sup>71</sup> The pope at the time of the fall of Algeciras was Clement VI, but it can be assumed that Villani's remarks also refer to Benedict XII, especially considering that he was pope when Alfonso began planning for the siege in 1341–42, and even appealed to the Genoese for aid on behalf of the king. Villani, iii, 372–3 (book 13, ch. 31). Also see *Gran crónica de Alfonso XI*, ed. D. Catalán, Fuentes Cronísticas de la Historia de España, 4, 2 vols (Madrid, 1976), ii, 359–77; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 61; O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade*, 173.

*articulo mortis* for six years to King Charles-Robert of Hungary for warfare against the ‘schismatic’ Lithuanians and ‘infidel’ Tartars on his northern frontier, and a year later he decreed the preaching of a crusade in Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia in aid of King Casimir of Poland, once more against the ‘perfidious Tartars’ who were ‘rabidly’ attacking the Christians of those regions. For this crusade, the participants were to receive plenary indulgences, equal to those issued in aid of the Holy Land, for service of one year or for funding a suitable fighter to go in their place.<sup>72</sup> All three kingdoms were directly threatened by the Tartars at this time, so the response to Benedict’s concessions was presumably positive, although specific details are hard to determine. Nevertheless, we can presume that many were willing to join this crusade, which may explain why Casimir was able to inflict a crushing defeat against the Tartars in January 1341.<sup>73</sup>

The actions of the pope in regard to Iberia and north-eastern Europe suggest that, when the conditions were right, the papacy was willing to contribute financial aid and crusader privileges in an attempt to strengthen the position of the Catholics in these regions. The situation in Iberia was certainly aided by the immediacy of the threat and the fact that the Christian rulers had already united and organized themselves against the Marinids. Similarly in Poland and Hungary, the pope was able to grant privileges to kings for the defence of their realms. This was in contrast to the Eastern Mediterranean, where the struggles against the Turks were not centred on one strong Catholic ruler and were often tied up in negotiations with Christian groups who were not always in full communion with the Church of Rome.

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<sup>72</sup> *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia*, ed. A. Theiner, 2 vols (Rome, 1859–60), i, docs 945 (17 January 1339), 958–9 (1 August 1340); Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 67–8, 71.

<sup>73</sup> P.W. Knoll, *The Rise of the Polish Monarchy: Piast Poland in East Central Europe, 1320–1370* (Chicago, 1972), 132–3; Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 68.

## Conclusions

Benedict XII's crusading policy was dictated by events in Europe and a preoccupation with internal Church reform, both of which hindered plans for a crusade to the Eastern Mediterranean. Yet the pope was still able to offer significant spiritual and financial support to the rulers of Iberia and Eastern Europe, possibly because they had already organized themselves against their respective enemies and papal support for them did not depend on any complicated political wrangling or, more importantly, doctrinal issues. In regard to a crusade to the Eastern Mediterranean, the escalation of the conflict between England and France effectively ended the plans that Benedict had inherited from John XXII, even though the pope was still able to implement some form of a policy in regard to the other Christians in *Romania*. However, on these occasions the enforcement of orthodoxy took precedence and the pope rarely, if ever, answered favourably to the appeals of the Latins for aid against the Turks. For example, he was receptive to appeals from Armenia against the Mamluks and from Walter of Brienne against the Catalans, but he refused to support a Venetian and Hospitaller league in the Aegean, or to form a union with the Byzantine emperor for a united front against the Turks.

Because the pontificate of Benedict marked a growing separation between the priorities of the Curia and those of the Latins in the East, it can be seen as a crucial stepping-stone in the formation of a new crusade strategy. This was one aimed at defending Christian territories from the Turks. It was planned and instigated by the Latin powers of the Eastern Mediterranean, with limited initiative and organization from the papacy and the rulers of Western Europe. The reasons for Benedict's attitude are numerous and multi-faceted. The worsening of the Anglo-French war, financial constraints, and the conflicts within Europe all undoubtedly diverted the pope's focus from the East, although in Iberia and Eastern Europe papal support was more forthcoming. Therefore, it is tempting, as many have argued, to

attribute Benedict's lack of interest in a Levantine crusade to his character. To quote Norman Housley, Benedict 'was far more interested in reforming the regular Church and suppressing heterodoxy than in launching crusades'.<sup>74</sup> Considering that only a year after the Benedict's death his successor was able to launch a successful crusade against the Turks in more trying circumstances, then the personal character of Benedict XII may well have been the overriding factor.

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<sup>74</sup> Housley, *Avignon Papacy*, 27.